

People, Power and Change

A Summary from the Africa Global Monitoring Framework (GMF) Learning Meeting – 5th to 8th December, 2006

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People's Problems are Complex. Change is Complex. The forces of power that can influence the life of one individual are many and complex. The number of problems that can affect the life of one individual are many and interrelated. The better we understand the complexity; and the relationships between People and Power in that complexity, the more real and effective we can be.



How often do we engage with that complexity? How often do we facilitate others to see the complexity? How easy is it for us to only see one set of problems and fail to see the complexity that keeps people powerless? How often do we find ourselves investing and focusing only on one set of problems and get surprised that the poverty and injustice facing people continues to increase?



How often do we try and solve problems with our own opinions without engaging with the complexity?

How often do we sit far away from the problem and try and strategize and identify how we can best engage?

How do we make sense of all this complexity?

Does the complexity of change, and people's realities inform the choices we make, or do we do things in a vacuum or because we have to?

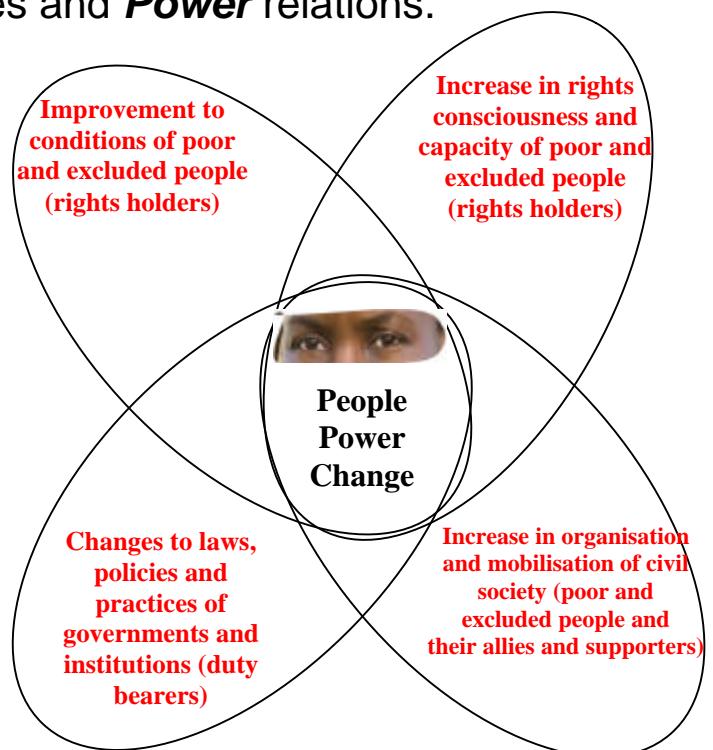
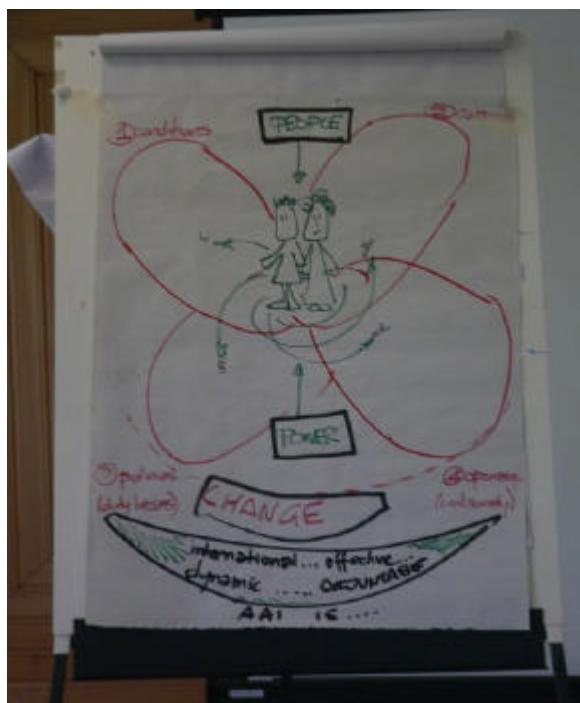
What do we monitor in our work? Really? Activities? Events? Budgets? Dates? Timelines? Our own perceptions and realities? What?



How and when do we actually monitor **Change**? Is there a difference between monitoring **Change** and monitoring activities? How do we know whether what we do has any relationship to changing **People's** lives and the relationships of **Power** that exist between people?

The Global Monitoring Framework (GMF) is a lens...a way of looking at our work differently and helps us ask whether and how **Change** is actually happening in **People's** lives and **Power** relations.

It helps us SEE things from the perspective of People, Power and Change.



You may change laws, but this does not necessarily translate to improvement of conditions of poor and excluded people.

You may organize and mobilize in mass, but this may not lead to laws, policies and practices of governments being changed, nor lead to improvement in the conditions of poor and excluded people.

How does change happen? When is it sustained? Who is involved? Where is power changing? How is that happening? How do we fit into the picture? What do we learn?



Can this lens, this way of looking at things from a People, Power and Change perspective be used simply?

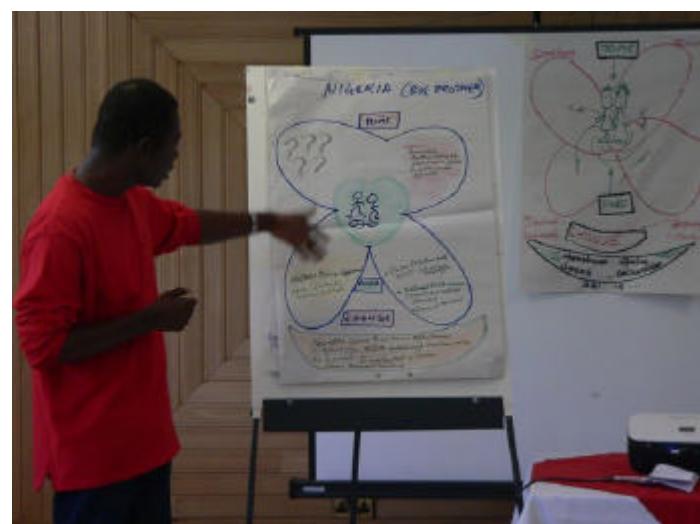
Can we use it in all our processes? From the way we strategize? To the way we plan? To the way we communicate our work? To the way we review and reflect?

How do things look when we use this different lens?

Do we see how little our annual reports communicate? Do we see how different our strategies and plans could be? Do we see how much richer and deeper our review and reflections could be? Isn't it quite easy to use....



Don't we become more critical?
Can't we be more rigorous?
Can't this help us monitor
change better? Doesn't this
help us to question and
challenge our work better?
Does it help us see whether
change is really happening in
people's lives and power
relations around them? Can this
help us improve our work and
practice?





So the Global Monitoring Framework can be baptized as People, Power and Change, and be applied to pretty much any process in our work. Its use is beyond monitoring. Any one of us can use it...it's that simple

Things are interconnected. Who pulls the strings? Do we pull strings that keep poor people in the same place? Are there other things pulling



at poor people that have greater negative impact on their lives than the strings we pull? What is that that enables a poor person to move away from this situation of entanglement? What is our ideology and belief of how change happens in this complex, interconnected world? Why are we pulling on certain strings? Would things be different if we let

go? Or picked other strings?

People, Power and Change...that is what the Global Monitoring Framework is about. It helps us try and question and make sense of complexity. What are our roles then?



Facilitator? Motivator? Designer?
Inspirer? Challenger? Critical Thinker?
Supporter? Questioner? Coordinator?
Coach? Guide? Helper?

What role will you play?

And So We Made Commitments....



Girma (Ethiopia)...Vincent (Ghana)...Morris (Liberia)...Ken (Malawi)...Stanley (Nigeria)
Mediatrice (Rwanda)...John (Sierra Leone)...Maimuna (Tanzania)...Kebba (The Gambia)
Martin (Uganda)...Stanlake (Zimbabwe)...Loice (Kenya)...Ashish (Kenya)...Silva (Italy)
Laurie (South Africa)

People....Power....Change
That's what it's about!
(if things get too complicated use colours!)



Photos Courtesy Silvia Ferretti